

# Common Sense: Care of Strains (How to Use Ice)

Arizona Department of Corrections  
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program  
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A strain is a stretched, injured muscle or tendon (a part of the body that connects muscle to bone).

A sprain is a stretched, injured ligament (a part of the body that connects bone to bone).

A contusion is a bruise.

If you have a strain, sprain or contusion, you may be told to rest, elevate the injured area and apply ice to it.

When applying ice, follow these directions:

1. Apply ice, wrapped in a paper towel or something similar, to affected area for not more than 10-15 minutes at a time. Then leave the ice off for at least 15 minutes.
2. Ice may be applied intermittently for up to 72 hours as directed by the health care provider.

## **Other Instructions:**